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U.S. believes Libya plotting new attacks

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SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — The Reagan administration said yesterday Libya still desires to commit acts of world terrorism, but the United States and its allies are prepared to prevent them.

White House spokesman Larry Speakes said the joint military exercises of U.S. and Egyptian forces are unrelated to the Libyan threat. He said "Operation Sea Breeze" was planned months ago.

"We watch [Col. Muammar] Qaddafi's activities very closely, and we keep a close eye on what he may be planning," he said. "We will use all appropriate means to counter terrorism with a high level of cooperation from our allies."

The spokesman declined to discuss whether Col. Qaddafi has resumed terrorist plots since the United States bombed two Libyan bases last April in retaliation for the Libyan bomb attack on a West Berlin nightclub.

Other administration officials in Washington, however, said they believe Col. Qaddafi is plotting a new wave of terrorist attacks against American targets in Europe and the Mideast, and they have drawn up plans to retaliate.

Sources said the Pentagon is completing plans for a new and larger bombing of Libya in case President Reagan orders it.

The officials, who asked not to be identified, said reports indicated Col. Qaddafi, possibly using hard-to-trace "surrogates" such as Palestinian Arabs, appeared to be planning attacks against U.S. interests in West Germany.

"There are some reports the bad guys might go after the ambassador in Bonn," one official said in a reference to Richard Burt, the U.S. ambassador to West Germany.

The officials, who insisted they not be identified, told United Press International the CIA has become convinced the volatile Libyan leader is moving back into the terrorism business.

"We know the Libyans have forgotten the lesson they learned last April," a senior U.S. official told The Wall Street Journal. Another top official was quoted as saying Col. Qaddafi "seems to have gone off his rocker again."

The Journal said the United States has prepared a three-pronged program of military, covert and economic actions intended to pre-empt more Libyan-sponsored terrorism, to exacerbate political and economic tensions in Libya, and to remind Col. Qaddafi and his inner circle that pro-

moting terrorism may be hazardous to their health.

Asked to comment on the visit of Syrian President Hafez Assad to Libya, Mr. Speakes sidestepped comment except to say that the leaders of the region "are free to go where they like."

Mr. Assad arrived in Libya on an unannounced visit Sunday, the day the United States and Egypt launched their five-day maneuvers.

The Libyan news agency JANA quoted the Syrian president as saying: "Syria strongly and unhesitatingly stands in one trench alongside the Libyan masses. ... Any harm done to Libya will hit Syria as well ... and any aggression against it will be an aggression against Syria."

Col. Qaddafi has condemned the joint maneuvers as a threat to his country, while U.S. officials insist they are not even near the Libyan coast.

Diplomats in Damascus said Mr. Assad and Col. Qaddafi also were likely to discuss their support for Iran in its six-year war against Iraq amid signs that Iran will expand the war and threaten all Persian Gulf oil exports.

Foreign and oil ministers of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council are scheduled to meet today and tomorrow in Saudi Arabia to discuss Iranian threats against countries that support Iraq.

This year alone, 57 tankers have been hit and damaged in the "tanker war," an offshoot of the ground fighting in the conflict between Iran and Iraq.